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Република Северна Македонија
Republika e Maqedonisë së Veriut
Агенција за цивилно воздухопловство
Agjencia e Aviacionit Civil

Бр.-Нр. 10-1466/1
19-11-2025 год. VIII
Гашпа-Шкуп



OPERATIONAL AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE
NATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE CENTER
AS
THE SEARCH AND RESCUE AUTHORITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
AND
THE CIVIL AVIATION AGENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH
MACEDONIA
AS
THE SEARCH AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
FOR
AERONAUTICAL SEARCH AND RESCUE (SAR) OPERATIONS
IN THE
PORTION OF OHRID LAKE AREA

National Search and Rescue Center as the Search and Rescue Authority of the Republic of Albania

AND

The Civil Aviation Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia as the Search and Rescue Authority

FOR

Aeronautical Search and Rescue (SAR) Operations

Considering that the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention, 1944) and its Annex 12 on Search and Rescue (SAR) establish the international framework for SAR operations;

Recognizing the importance of rapid and effective search and rescue interventions for saving lives and mitigating the consequences of hazards;

Taking into account the Agreement signed on 14 November 2022 between the Government of Republic of North Macedonia and Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania on the delegation of air traffic services in a portion of the airspace above Ohrid Lake;

Considering that the Parties to this Agreement are simultaneously Members of the Regional Advisory Committee for Aeronautical Search and Rescue;

Acknowledging the need for coordination, mutual support, and regional cooperation in search and rescue matters;

The National Search and Rescue Centre of the Republic of Albania and the Civil Aviation Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia, as the Search and Rescue Authority, hereinafter jointly referred to as the “Parties” and individually as a “Party”, have agreed as follows:

Article 1

Object of the Agreement

The object of this Agreement is to define the operational actions and communication methods between the Parties to this Agreement for aeronautical search and rescue operations in the portion of Ohrid Lake area.

Article 2

Purpose

The purpose of this Agreement is to define:

- The procedures for requesting, accepting and providing SAR assistance;
- The facilitation of border crossing and logistical arrangements;
- The definition of coordination responsibilities for the portion of Ohrid Lake area.

Article 3

Abbreviations

Albcontrol	Albanian Air Navigation Service
M-NAV GOJSC	Macedonian Government-owned Joint Stock Company for Air Traffic Management and Air Navigation Services
RCC	Rescue Coordination Center
JRCC	Joint Rescue Coordination Center
ATC	Air Traffic Control
ACC	Air Control Centre
ATS	Air Traffic Service
CTR	Control Area
TWR	Control Tower
INO	International NOTAM Office
AFTN	Aeronautical Fixed Telecommunication Network
SRR	Search and Rescue Region
OSC	On Scene Coordinator
SC	SAR Coordinator
SITREP	Situation Report
EXERCISE	Exercise

Article 4

Responsibilities of the RCC Tirana of the Republic of Albania

RCC Tirana: Responsible for aeronautical search and rescue operations in the area above Ohrid Lake, as defined in Annex 1 of this Agreement.

RCC Tirana acts as the National Search and Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC), under the authority of the Ministry of Defence, and in close cooperation with the Civil Aviation Authority of the Republic of Albania, pursuant to the obligations defined in ICAO Annex 12.

The National Search and Rescue Centre ensures inter-institutional coordination with the Armed Forces, State Police, Border Police, Civil Emergencies, medical services, and local authorities, in order to guarantee immediate and effective response in the event of air emergencies.

RCC Tirana is also responsible for:

- Activating air, maritime and land Search and Rescue Units (SRUs);
- Coordinating with the Air Traffic Services Authority (Albcontrol) for flight information and distress signals;
- Appointing an On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) during joint operations;
- Exchanging information and operational coordination with RCC Skopje, in accordance with the procedures established in this Agreement.

RCC Tirana ensures that national search and rescue capacities are available for operations in the relevant portion of Ohrid Lake area and provides technical and logistical support to the participating forces of both Parties.

The portion of Ohrid Lake area is defined in Annex 1 to this Agreement.

Article 5

Responsibilities of RCC Skopje of the Republic of North Macedonia

RCC Skopje: Responsible for the coordination of aeronautical search and rescue (SAR) operations within the Skopje Search and Rescue Region (SRR).

Government-owned Joint Stock Company for Air Traffic Management and Air Navigation Services (M-NAV GOJSC): Responsible for the provision of air traffic services in the portion above Ohrid Lake, in accordance with the Agreement signed on 14 November 2022 between the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania.

Article 6

Working Language

The working language between the search and rescue services shall be English, except in cases where the Parties mutually agree otherwise.

Article 7

Area of Applicability

This Agreement applies exclusively to search and rescue operations in the part of the FIR delegated to M-NAV GOJSC for the provision of air traffic services, in accordance with the Agreement dated 14 November 2022.

The operational responsibility for SAR in this area remains under the coordination of RCC Tirana (Republic of Albania).

The geographical coordinates and the map of the portion of Ohrid Lake area are defined in *Annex 1*.

This delegation does not alter international borders or the overall division of Search and Rescue Regions (SRR).

Article 8

Cooperation between RCCs

Each Party undertakes to provide mutual support through its respective Rescue Coordination Centres (RCCs).

SAR responsibility in this area will remain under the operational coordination of RCC Tirana, for incidents occurring in the area of Ohrid Lake.

Upon receiving notification of an incident in this area, both Parties shall immediately inform RCC Tirana.

Requests for assistance shall be processed immediately in accordance with the agreed procedures.

Each Party shall support the other with its own Search and Rescue Units (SRUs). Annex 2 shall define the means of communication between RCC Tirana and RCC Skopje (phone, e-mail, fax, etc.).

If one Party receives information about an incident within its SRR, it shall take immediate action to provide assistance, regardless of the nationality of the persons involved or the circumstances of the incident.

When RCC Tirana receives information about an incident in the area of Ohrid Lake, it shall act immediately to provide the most appropriate assistance.

If RCC Tirana requests assistance from RCC Skopje, the following procedures shall apply:

- All requests for assistance shall be sent to the respective RCC, including details of the support requested;
- Requests shall be accepted immediately;
- The RCC receiving the request shall respond as soon as possible with its capacity to provide assistance.

Requests for assistance shall include:

- Full details of the planned mission;
- Search areas;
- Meteorological conditions;
- Type of assistance requested;
- Estimated duration of SRU presence at the incident site;

- Full contact details of the On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) and each SRU involved.

Additional Conditions:

- Weapons, ammunition or explosives shall not be transported into the SRR of the other Party without special authorization;
- SRU personnel may wear their standard uniforms;
- The requesting SAR authority shall inform its national authorities before any SAR operation involving entry of SRUs into the SRR of the other Party.

Article 9

Coordination

Search and rescue missions shall be coordinated by the RCC responsible for the SRR in which the mission is being conducted, unless otherwise agreed by the Parties.

To facilitate the coordination referred to in this section, the Parties should, to the best of their ability, keep each other fully and promptly informed of all relevant SAR operations. The Parties should develop appropriate procedures in accordance with the IAMSAR Manual to provide for the most effective and efficient means of communication.

For efficiency, RCCs may agree on alternative coordination methods.

In joint SAR missions:

- The RCC of the Party in whose territory the mission takes place shall coordinate communication with the rescue units;
- All essential communications shall be confirmed in writing using the SITREP format.

RCCs shall inform each other about:

- Radio frequencies and respective call signs;
- Phone, Fax, and AFTN numbers;
- Any changes to this information.

Regular communication checks shall be conducted.

The SITREP format, marked with the word “EXERCISE” at the beginning and end, shall be used for simulated SAR exercises. The response shall indicate the ability to provide assistance.

All communications shall be recorded for post-mission analysis.

Article 10

Forms of Cooperation

The Parties agree to hold regular meetings, hosted alternately, to address:

- Semi-annual meetings between the SAR responsible authorities;
- Liaison visits by SAR experts;
- Communication checks (at least once every three months);
- Opportunities for SAR experts to observe each other's national exercises.

Exchange of SAR information, including:

- Details of SAR facilities;
- Description of available airports;
- Availability of fuel and medical services;
- Joint exercises and reciprocal visits of SAR personnel;
- Joint development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and SAR techniques.

Whenever possible, these meetings may be combined with multinational SAR events and exercises.

Article 11

Finances

Unless otherwise agreed by the Parties, each Party is to fund its own expenses for activities pertinent to this agreement.

Article 12

Supervision of RCCs

The supervision of RCC Tirana and SAR activities in the portion of Ohrid Lake area shall be carried out by the Albanian Civil Aviation Authority (AAC), as the competent authority of the providing State, in accordance with national regulations.

This supervision shall ensure transparency of safety mechanisms and their outcomes.

RCC Tirana and RCC Skopje shall communicate regarding any operational changes and, at least every six months, exchange information on the status of communication systems and infrastructure affecting SAR operations in the joint area.

The Civil Aviation Authorities of both Parties (CAA Republic of Albania and CAA Republic of North Macedonia) shall ensure that a joint safety assessment is conducted every two years, or earlier if a SAR operation occurs in the portion of Ohrid Lake area.

Article 13

Entry into force

This Operational Agreement shall enter into force on the date it is signed by both Parties. It shall remain in force as long as the 14 November 2022 Agreement is active.

It may be terminated by written notice; termination shall become effective three months after receipt by the other Party.

Any amendment to this Operational Agreement shall be subject to a supplementary agreement, signed under the same conditions.

Done in duplicate at Tiranë on this 25 day of November, 2025, in the English language.

FOR THE SEARCH AND RESCUE AUTHORITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA:

Name: FIQIRI HOXHA
Title: Head of National Search and Rescue Center
Date: 25.11.2025
Country: Tiranë, Albania

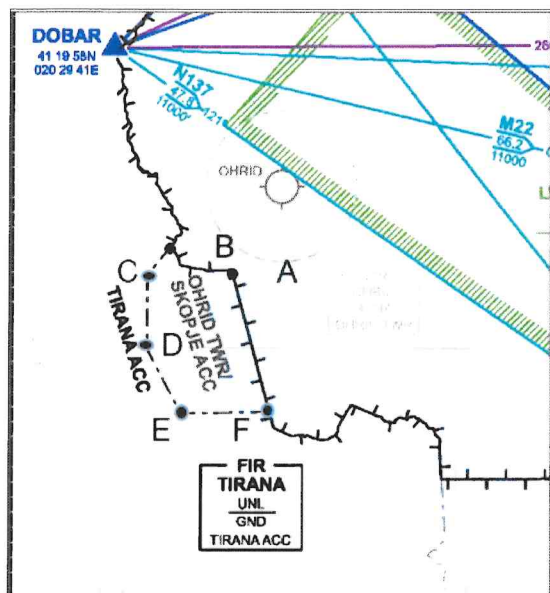


FOR THE SEARCH AND RESCUE AUTHORITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA:

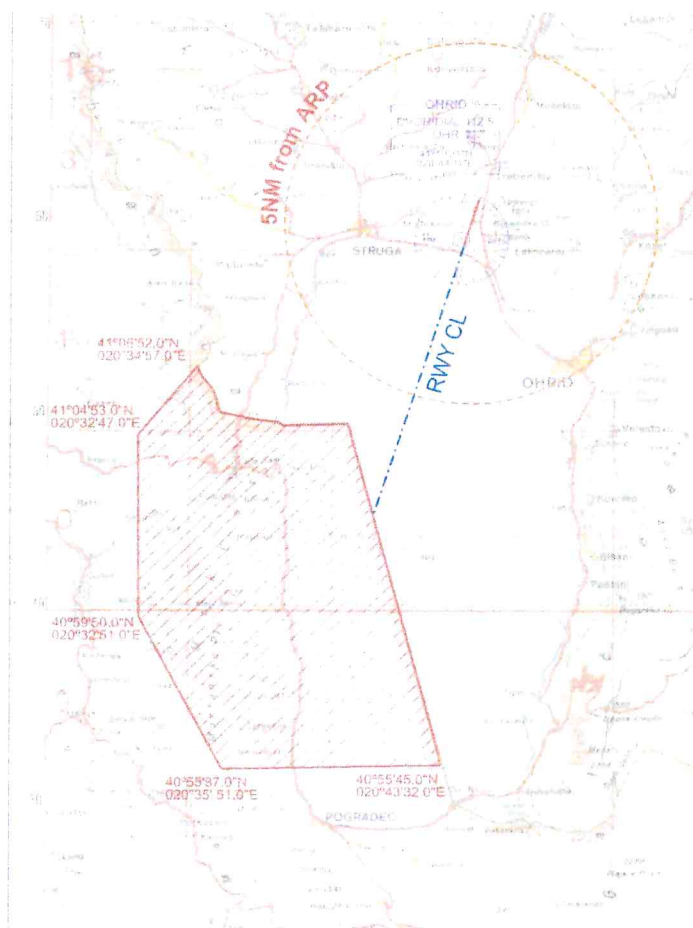
Name: DRAGI STOJANOSKI
Title: Director General
Date: 25.11.2025



ANNEX 1 **Geographic Coordinates and MAP of the portion of Ohrid Lake area** **SAR Delegation Area**

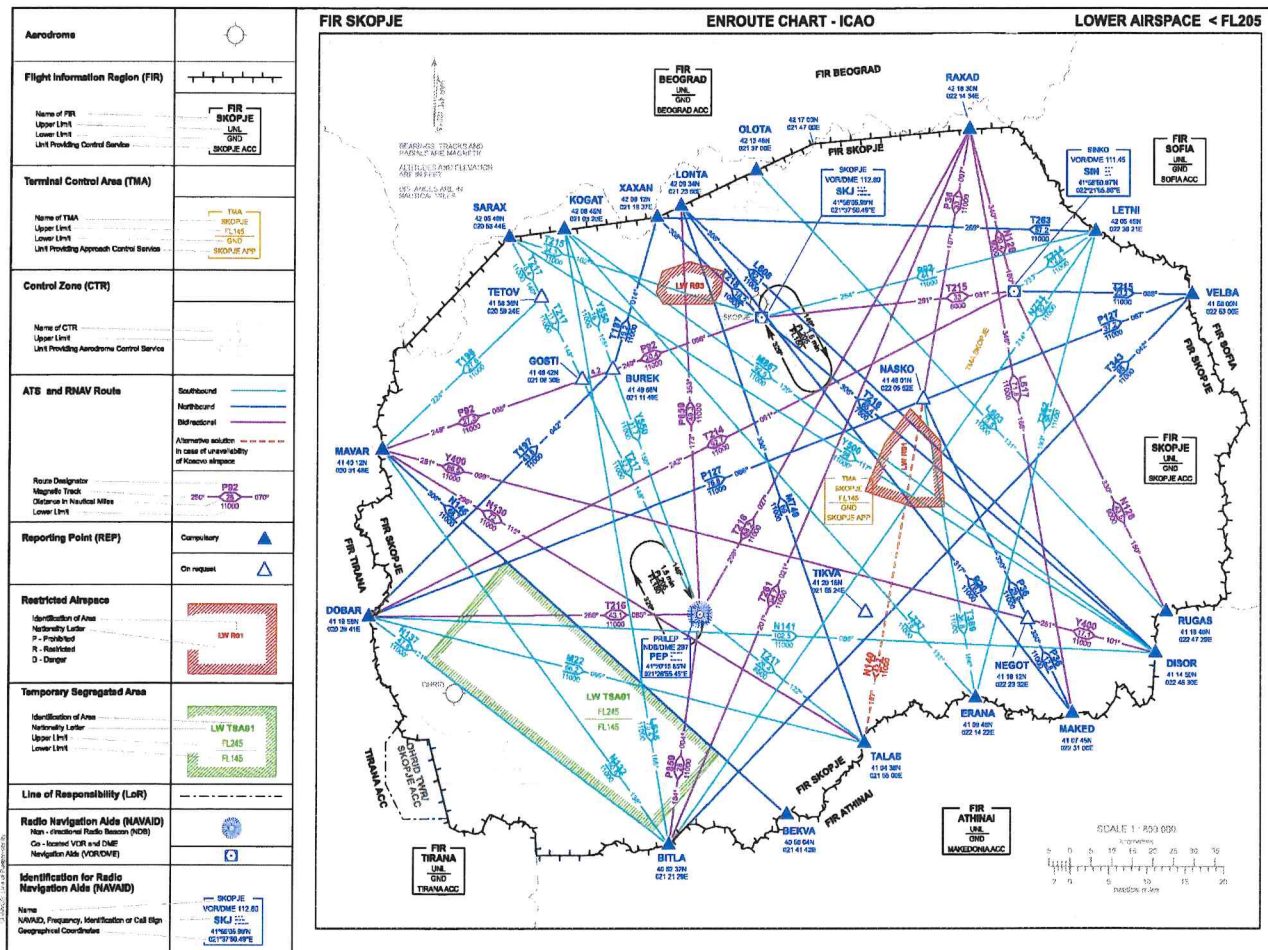


Portion of the Ohrid Lake area - Bearing in mind the Agreement signed on 14 November 2022 between the Government of Republic of North Macedonia and Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania on the delegation of air traffic services in a portion of the airspace above Ohrid Lake



COORDINATES

- Point B: 41°06'52"N, 20°34'57"E
- Point C: 41°04'53"N, 20°32'47"E
- Point D: 40°59'50"N, 20°32'51"E
- Point E: 40°55'37"N, 20°35'51"E
- Point F: 40°55'45"N, 20°43'32"E



ANNEX 2 Communications and Priority

1. RCC TIRANA

The Search and Rescue (SAR) service in the Republic of Albania is administered under the authority of the Minister of Defence.

The National Search and Rescue Centre (RCC Tirana) is the central structure for search and rescue, operating under the Ministry of Defence.

RCC Tirana serves as the National Point of Contact (SPOC) for Search and Rescue operations and is responsible for the activation, planning, and coordination of SAR operations in the event of aeronautical accidents occurring on portion of Ohrid Lake area.

RCC Tirana is also responsible for cross-border cooperation and for coordinating SAR operations along the state border and in border-adjacent areas in cases of air accidents.

Depending on operational needs, the following structures may participate in search and rescue operations:

- Search and Rescue Units of the Air Force;
- Search and Rescue Units of the Land Force;
- Search and Rescue Units of the Naval Force;
- Water Rescue Units of the Support Command;
- Air Traffic Services units (Albcontrol);
- Volunteer teams of the Albanian Aeronautical Federation;
- The Albanian Red Cross.

Contact Information:

Phone (Primary): +355 42 240 081

Mobile (Primary): +355 68 804 6638

AFTN: Not available at the moment

Secondary E-mail: nsarc@aaf.mil.al; qkksh@aaf.mil.al

Fax: +355 42 240 087

Address:

Ministry of Defence / National Search and Rescue Centre
"Rruga e Dibrës", P.O. Box 2423
TIRANA – ALBANIA

2. RCC SKOPJE

The Search and Rescue service is under the responsibility of the Civil Aviation Agency. Rescue Coordination Centre Skopje is created with representatives from Civil Aviation Agency and the Government-owned Joint Stock Company for Air Traffic Management and Air Navigation Services M-NAV GOJSC. The RCC Skopje is responsible for activation, planning and coordination of SAR within Search and Rescue Region Skopje.

In SAR operations, depending on the need thereof, the following resources take part, that is:

- Air force units;
- Military lake units;
- Military lake units;
- Red Cross of North Macedonia;
- Air Traffic Services units;
- Civil airlines;
- Aeronautical Federation of North Macedonia.

SAR service do the performance of distress monitoring in civil aviation, organizes search and rescue for distress aircraft, initial medical assistance for and medical evacuation of distressed people to the medical centres.

Contact Information:

Primary AFTN: LWSKZPZX;

Secondary - E-mail: sar@caa.gov.mk - Fax: +389 2 3148263

Address:

M-NAV GOJSC

Rescue Coordination Centre

Search and Rescue Point of Contact (SPOC)

Address: "Bosfor" Nr. 7, Mralino, 1041
Ilinden, 1000 Skopje
Republic of North Macedonia
Tel: +389 2 3148 100

ACC Skopje

Phone: ++389 2 3148 141 / 3148 408

**Civil Aviation Agency
Rescue Coordination Centre**

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SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICES

